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close to the wall which is farthest away from the door, the head of the snake being deposited in a pot inside the tomb nearest the door. Some close beside the pot containing the head of the snake on the right, and the vessel containing those of the females on the left hand. Then offerings of food and libations of liquor are offered to the ancestors on a stone in front of the tomb. The males then perform a ceremonial dance with swords and shields, three times, and the door of the sepulchre is closed, a flag being fixed to the tomb. All the clansfolk then depart except three men. One of these sacrifices a cock (*see* reading) in front of the tomb, a second sits behind the sacrificer, holding three fowls, and a third sits behind the tomb. The man with the fowls shakes them about, and then moves like a cock three times. The man behind the tomb listens attentively for any fancied noise within it, the superstition being that if the ceremonies detailed above have not been properly performed, the whole tomb will quake. If the three watchers are satisfied that there is no commotion within the tomb, then all is well, and they return and report the result to the clansfolk. This ceremony is called *tuerlang*, or the fire test. Next morning the woman who is the head of the *ing-wey*, or pigs-house, distributes to all those who have taken part in these sacrifices the kinder portions of the sacrificial animals. She then throws on by one the assembled clansfolk. The latter are not permitted by custom to go to work until after three days from the time of the ceremony, the third day being called *ka ngei kut ia*. The ceremony described above is a symbolical one. The massive stone sepulchre is regarded as a symbol of a secure place of rest for the departed spirits. If the spirits of the dead are not, however, appeased by the due performance of the ceremonies attending the burial of the corpse in the clan sepulchre, it is believed that they roam about and haunt their relations on earth, and plague them with various misfortunes. It may be interesting to note here, that Mr. Mobely, the Superintendent of Ethnography in Bengal, reports that the ashes of deceased Hos, after being sprinkled with water by means of pepul branches, are collected, dried, and placed in a new earthen pot, and kept in the house until the day of burial, which may take place, or with

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The cost of an archery contest varies considerably. In general it can be said that a shooter pays one anna (about 10 pfennigs, peace evaluation) for each shot. All the various competitions together produce a tidy little sum, especially when the attendance is good. I have come across figures as high as 50 to 70 rupees which were got together in this way during the course of a year and were then spent at the end of the year together at a great feast after the main competition.

It is frequently the custom among the Synteng, not to collect this contribution, anna by anna; rather, a large sum, which is raised by collecting signatures, is bet with the opponent at the main shooting (the final game). This also occurs occasionally among the Khasi. (31)

31. Gurdon, The Khasis, reports on page 56 that a sum of 300 rupees was bet in the Nongkrem state in Khadar Bleng at a shooting competition.

9. The Feast after the Archery Contest

A general feast is arranged with the money bet or saved. Everything is just as wild during this feast as during the archery competition. Several strong men go forth to fetch the pigs bought for this occasion. The living animals are tied to bamboo poles by [illegible] carry each a burden on their shoulders to the place of the festival. There is lively activity at that place. The men stand around huge fires and chat. Others busily arrange dishes and pots of brass --everything pertaining

527 clean. Others break off palm leaves and twigs from trees to decorate themselves and the place. A music ban takes care of the necessary noise. The three pigs and goats are received with shouts. Without much ceremony the animals are slain and now the actual festival begins: the cooking, the dancing and the eating.

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The people divide into various groups. Some divide the slaughtered animals by the light of a great fire. The pieces of meat are put in one pile, the fat in another. About ten men sit around in a circle and begin to cut the meat into small cubes. These are then placed on little three-sided bamboo sticks. All the rest of the meat, such as lungs, heart, kidneys, and brains are put together in a cooking pot. The girls and women sit at a third fire. They hold the fat and lard on long bamboo sticks over the fire to roast it on all sides by constant turning.

527 The rest of the men dance to the peculiar music. Each person dances alone. They hold long bamboo sticks in their right hands, and in their left hands they hold a bunch of branches from a tree or large leaves. Some make huge turbans for themselves out of rice straw. Decorated thus they hop from one foot to another, make deep bows now to the left, now to the right and alternately swing their bamboo sticks or their bunches of leaves. Others turn around in circles beating time with their palm leaves. When the dancers are tired they take over the job of cutting the meat and cooking and the others decorate themselves for the dance. In reply to my question, what this all means, I received the following answer: "We are happy and for once we wish to have a thoroughly good time. We

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om the money in the archery contest and how we should have a big feast. It is full moon now and much more beautiful during the night than the day. Oh, we are just having a good time." At once he swung his bunches of leaves and hopped away. The women take care of stirring the cooking pots. They are not happy about the moon. A bamboo, which at first our dancer might have just thrown away, is quite adequate for this purpose. When everything is ready, the people sit down in groups and eat the meat. Rice brandy is handed around. When the archers and other guests at the festival are more than sated and exhausted from all the dancing, they leave the place towards morning.

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It should be pointed out that contrary to their usual customs the Khasi eat no rice at the great feast after the archery competition but only meat, with which brandy is drunk. There is a good deal of overindulgence in food and drink on this occasion. (32)

32. P.F. Stegmiller, "Das Fest nach dem Pfeilschiessen" /The Feast after the Archery Contest/. Salvatorianische Mitteilungen /Salvatorian Communications/, 1910, No. 3.

b. Hunting Customs

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Although there are all sorts of wild animals in the Khasi hills and Jaintia hills that can be hunted -- flying foxes which visit the orange gardens during the night, jackals, which annoy the villages with their howling, antelopes, does, deer and wild pigs which damage the rice fields, wild dogs, wolves,)